

A REALISTIC INFRASTRUCTURE AGENDA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, the tortured Presidential nominating process continues with generalities and insults, but maybe we could avert our eyes and attention for a moment and consider some real challenges that we face closer at hand.

The backdrop in the metropolitan area in Washington, D.C., is that D.C. Metro has shut down for the entire day to deal with safety concerns—an unprecedented step. The bigger issue for most people in the region, for most riders and potential users, is the system's reliability.

It is a symbol of a lack of resources and a lack of leadership, not just for Metro, but for the States of Virginia, Maryland, the District of Columbia, and the Federal Government itself. They have, sadly, been lacking in leadership, in vision, and providing the resources for this vital system for a region of approximately 4 million people.

At the same time, we have a looming water and sewer crisis, almost 2 million miles of pipe, in some cases long past its useful life. A water main breaks every 2 minutes. We have serious problems with system reliability with sewage.

The city of Flint, Michigan, and its terrible situation with lead in the drinking water has captured attention, but it has also pointed out for people who look deeper that this is a problem that afflicts communities across the country. We have, according to the American Society of Civil Engineers, an overall grade, as a country, of D dealing with sewer and water challenges.

What if the major candidates would train their attention on serious proposals to deal with the infrastructure crisis already upon us? Not mere generalities, but let's talk about how they would pay for it. What is their vision to deal with multiple needs, and how would they set priorities?

It is not really that hard. In a number of very red States, governments have stepped up to raise the gas tax and fund transportation. In metropolitan communities across the country, in red States and blue, people are dealing with their challenges, proposing to their communities funding and vision to solve the problem.

I have got bipartisan legislation to establish a Federal water infrastructure trust fund to help start in that regard.

We ought to fix the transportation funding. There is broad support amongst labor, business, profession AAA truckers to raise the gas tax and be able to deal with our transportation challenges.

Finally, we should embrace technology in transportation, things from self-driving, autonomous vehicles, elec-

tronic payment for road systems, a road user charge being experimented on in the State of Oregon. These are mechanisms that would help us update, modernize, and make these systems more effective.

And by the way, when you hear all those candidates talking about strengthening the middle class and the economy, these proposals would put millions of people to work at family-wage jobs in every community across America. It would strengthen safety and liveability and bring people together.

You know, when we have faced up to infrastructure challenges, whether it is Dwight Eisenhower's interstate freeway system, what we have done in the past with clean water and clean air, those are things that are broadly supported by Americans. An infrastructure agenda, a realistic infrastructure agenda has the potential of bringing people together while it strengthens America, and it would certainly be a nice change of pace.

HONORING THE LIFE OF KRIS ANNE VOGELPOHL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas (Mr. WEBER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. WEBER of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and to celebrate the life of Kris Anne Vogelpohl of Galveston. Many know Kris Anne Vogelpohl as the matriarch of the Galveston County Republican Party.

Kris Anne made her way from Colorado to Galveston, where she became chief therapeutic dietician at the University of Texas Medical Branch in 1950. It was at UTMB where she met her future husband, Dr. Elmer Vogelpohl.

Kris Anne didn't waste any time getting involved in the community and local politics, too. In fact, in 1955, Kris Anne became one of the founding members of the Galveston Republican Women. From there, she solidified her GOP trailblazer status by becoming chairwoman of the Galveston Republican Party, where she thereupon built a strong foundation for the party to grow and build on.

In addition to her political service, Kris Anne was an avid philanthropist within the community. One of the organizations she invested her time in was the Salvation Army, where she joined their county advisory board in 1959.

Kris Anne's unwavering commitment to the betterment of society was a sight to behold, Mr. Speaker. She made everyone feel so welcomed. She empowered so many people to take charge and get involved. Her enthusiasm for making our county, our State, and our country even greater was infectious. The proof is in the pudding. Galveston has become one of the strongest Republican counties along the Gulf Coast and in Texas.

Dr. Vogelpohl could often be seen with Kris Anne in event after event all

over Galveston County. You talk about stalwarts, Mr. Speaker. My prayer is that we all be such sterling examples to those who come behind us. Lord knows that Dr. Elmer, as I call him, and Kris Anne were—or make that are, quite frankly.

Kris Anne lived to be 90 years old. She was married for 55 years and is survived by her husband, two children, and six grandchildren.

Kris Anne may be gone, but in reality she is still here. She will forever be in the hearts and minds of the people she touched.

Mr. Speaker, my thoughts and my prayers are with Dr. Elmer, their children, their grandchildren, and with the great multitude of friends she served. My prayer is also may the Great Shepherd of the Sheep, even the Lord Jesus Christ, wrap them up in His loving arms and comfort them. May He bless them and keep them. May God bless them all, and may God bless the great State of Texas and Galveston County that Kris Anne loved so much.

In a wonderful way, He has been blessing us. He loaned us Kris Anne.

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HONORING THE LIFE OF OFFICER JACAI COLSON

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Maryland (Ms. EDWARDS) for 5 minutes.

Ms. EDWARDS. Mr. Speaker, it is with great sorrow that I rise today to pay tribute and honor the life of Prince George's County Police Officer Jacai Colson, who was killed in the line of duty.

Line-of-duty deaths are always difficult to bear. A police officer or another first responder leaves their home, their station, or their vehicle, and their loved one, coworker, or partner expects to see them return.

My heart breaks for Jacai's loved ones and for the tight-knit community that is the Prince George's County Police Department.

On March 12, 2016, an off-duty detective, Police Officer First Class Jacai Colson, arrived at the District 3 police station in Landover, Maryland, with the intent of visiting a fellow officer, when matters took an unexpected turn for the worse.

We will continue to learn the details of this tragedy in the coming days. What we do know is that Officer Colson's actions saved lives and allowed his fellow officers to neutralize the threat, even as he made the ultimate sacrifice.

On behalf of the citizens of the Fourth Congressional District of Maryland, I want to extend my appreciation to Officer Colson for his selfless and heroic actions and his relentless dedication to public service.

I would like to remember the legacy Officer Colson leaves behind. He was a Pennsylvania native who played quarterback at Chichester High School in

Boothwyn, Pennsylvania, where he graduated.

Officer Colson then went on to play wide receiver and defensive back at Randolph-Macon College in Ashland, Virginia. His college football coach recalled Colson as “a really respectful kid and just a high-character young man. To be honest, he wasn’t a great player, but he was a really great person.”

Officer Jacai Colson was the grandson of a career police officer. He himself joined the Prince George’s County Police Department. After 2 years of service on the force, he joined the narcotics department. Officer Colson worked as an undercover detective. Later this week would have been his 29th birthday.

I well know how difficult a job our local police officers have. They are tasked with the tremendous responsibility of meeting the increasingly diverse needs of growing populations with diminishing resources.

At a time of so much national discussion about the relationship of law enforcement to our local communities, Officer Colson reminds us all of the important service and sacrifice of our men and women in blue.

Unfortunately, his death makes three officers that have been shot and killed in Maryland in 2016. Last month two officers from the Harford County Sheriff’s Office were fatally shot: Senior Deputy Mark Logsdon and Senior Deputy Patrick Dailey.

Today our police officers are being asked to be the first line of defense in our war on terror in addition to carrying out more traditional police work.

I want to thank them for their commitment to the citizens and families of this great State. They are Maryland’s heroes, and they have my utmost respect and support.

Officer Jacai Colson’s record of service was characterized by sacrifice, hard work, dedication to duty, and, most of all, by achievement. He leaves behind a legacy of service that others can and should aspire to.

Now that his time on Earth has come to a needlessly premature end, it is my hope that Officer Jacai Colson has found the peace he has earned. On behalf of this House, I extend my sincerest gratitude and condolences to James and Sheila Colson, his parents; his entire family; friends; Prince George’s County Police Chief Hank Stawinski; Major Kathleen Mills, District 3 Commander; the entire Prince George’s County Police Department; and the Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 89.

May God continue to comfort and sustain each of you.

AMICUS BRIEF ON BEHALF OF THE U.S. V. TEXAS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. WAGNER) for 5 minutes.

Mrs. WAGNER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 639.

Mr. Speaker, we are a Nation of immigrants. But, more importantly, we are a Nation of laws. We are also a Nation governed by a Constitution, a Constitution designed by our Founders to protect the people from government.

This same Constitution enumerates specific powers to the executive, legislative, and judicial branches, these same powers that this President has decided he does not need to uphold.

As a result, we, as a united legislative body, will act this week against the President’s executive amnesty and overreach. We must act because it is time that Congress—Republicans and Democrats—stand up for the Constitution of the United States and against President Obama, who has decided to turn his back on the American people.

We must act because the security and economic opportunity that Americans are so desperate for today come with respecting, not undermining, the spirit of self-government for which our Nation was founded.

Mr. Speaker, the President knows that he is not permitted to write laws. Yet, through his executive amnesty, he is directly attacking Congress’ Article I power.

Today Congress will once again say no to President Obama. We will come together as an institution representing the American people to promote self-government.

I will vote in favor of the resolution on behalf of the great people of Missouri’s Second Congressional District and in defense of the powerful words of James Madison in 1788:

“The accumulation of all powers, legislative, executive, and judiciary, in the same hands, whether of one, a few, or many, and whether hereditary, self-appointed, or elective, may justly be pronounced the very definition of tyranny.”

I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this resolution and prevent this very tyranny we see today.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to refrain from engaging in personalities toward the President.

GENOCIDE OF RELIGIOUS MINORITIES

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Hawaii (Ms. GABBARD) for 5 minutes.

Ms. GABBARD. Mr. Speaker, there were two votes that occurred earlier this week on House Concurrent Resolution 75 and House Concurrent Resolution 121, which deal with very important and complex issues that I would like to talk about this morning.

I cosponsored and voted for House Concurrent Resolution 75 because of my grave concern about the genocide occurring against Christians, Alawites, Shiites, Druze, Yazidis, and other religious minorities in Syria.

However, I was extremely disappointed by amendment language that was later added to this resolution

that provides cover or an excuse for ISIS and other terrorist organizations committing this genocide.

Specifically, the language I object to is the following: “The protracted Syrian civil war and the indiscriminate violence of the Assad regime have contributed to the growth of ISIL and will continue to do so as long as this conflict continues.”

I fully reject this amendment to the resolution because it gives moral legitimacy to the actions of ISIS, al Qaeda, and others who are committing genocide against Christians, Yazidis, and other religious minorities in Syria.

This amendment is an obvious attempt to make ISIS look like their cause is legitimate. This is absolutely unacceptable and undermines the very heart and intent of this resolution.

This is very unfortunate because the problem of the genocide against Christians, Yazidis, and other religious minorities in Syria is very serious.

In fact, the main area in Syria where Christians and other religious minorities have any protection today from being slaughtered and where they can practice their religious faith without fear of prosecution is in the territory that is still controlled by the Syrian Government of Assad.

The reality is that the language added to this resolution, coupled with its sister resolution, House Concurrent Resolution 121, is really aimed at justifying the overthrow of Assad, the result of which would be a complete assault and elimination of Christians and other religious minorities in Syria.

The fact that this resolution, which was originally introduced to increase protection for Christians, Yazidis and other religious minorities, has now been hijacked so that it becomes a vehicle to increase the likelihood of an even greater genocide against those religious minorities is an absolute disgrace.

The reality is that, if the Assad regime is overthrown tomorrow, every Christian, every Yazidi, and every other religious minority and ethnic minority in Syria will be in even greater danger than ever before from the genocide being perpetrated by ISIS, al Qaeda, and others who are slaughtering them.

This resolution is no longer a sincere effort to protect religious minorities. It has instead become a resolution to give more legitimacy to ISIS and al Qaeda’s genocidal activities and would bring about an even greater genocide of those religious minorities by eliminating the only area where they now have refuge.

RECOGNIZING PRINCETON, INDIANA

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BUCSHON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BUCSHON. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring attention to an outstanding community in Indiana’s Eighth Congressional District.